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UNCLAS HARARE 001903

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PDPA FOR DALTON, MITCHELL AND SIMS  
NSC FOR JENDAYI FRAZER  
LONDON FOR GURNEY  
PARIS FOR NEARY  
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REPORT "DAILY NEWS" UPDATE; HARARE

11. Since the government of Zimbabwe outlawed the Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe on September 12, the popular independent daily newspaper "The Daily News" has not been appearing on the streets for five days. The newspaper's website has the message: "We apologize for the inconvenience. The 'Daily News' will be back online as soon as possible. Please come back regularly for updates on proceedings."
12. Meanwhile, the government-controlled Media and Information Commission (MIC) chaired by Dr. Tafataona Mahoso remains mute over an urgent application to register with the MIC submitted by the ANZ, publishers of "The Daily News" and its sister weekly "The Daily News on Sunday" which were shut by the GOZ on September 12 after ANZ lost a court case in which the newspaper group was challenging the legality of mandatory registration under the controversial Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA). This development has cast a dark shadow over the prospects of reopening soon.
13. According to press reports, police confiscated more than 120 computers from the offices of "The Daily News" and the "Daily News on Sunday" on Wednesday, September 17. ANZ Chief Executive Officer Mr. Samuel Sipepa Nkomo said police took away the computers so that they can prove in court that the papers have been breaking the law.
14. Journalists and workers working for the ANZ may not receive their salaries and wages for this month due to the closure and disruption of business at the ANZ offices by the police who are still manning the ANZ building and barring workers from entering the building. A chamber application has been filed by Nkomo, who is being charged for running ANZ without a license for the past nine months, in which he seeks to bar police from seizing the company's property and be allowed to continue operating while its registration papers are under consideration.
15. Post regrets to advise that veteran journalist and media consultant, Tarcey Munaku, has died. He participated in the March 10 to May 1, 2001, "Partners for African Leaders" exchange program hosted by the Indiana University. Munaku joined the government-controlled daily newspaper in the 1980s as a reporter and later joined the state-run news agency ZIANA (Zimbabwe Inter-Africa News Agency) where he rose to become Home Editor. He later joined "The Daily News" when it was formed and was its Political Editor. At the time of his death, Munaku had left "The Daily News" and was doing media consultancy work for the Media Institute of Southern Africa-Zimbabwe.

SULLIVAN